

Traveling with your four-legged friend makes any adventure—including this hike through Boulder's breathtaking Flatiron Mountains—indefinitely better. For the right lodging, we suggest an Airbnb rental that welcomes pets. These accommodations are often bigger than a hotel room, and some even have a backyard.



TRIPS THAT TRANSPORT



Vacations have a way of flying by and fading from memory all too quickly. When planning your next getaway, make it truly count by building in an unforgettable experience or two. Cook with a local chef, throw a pot at a famous ceramics studio, learn to meditate, or get up close to wildlife in the African bush. Consider these ideas as a jumping-off point, and we promise you'll bring home far more than a suntan and an airport souvenir.

>> AND TRANSFORM

| REPORTED BY JANE BROUGHTON, JAMIE FELDMAR, STIRLING KELSO, AND BROOKE PORTER KATZ |

COOK WITH A LOCAL



EMBRACE YOUR INNER ITALIAN

Sicilian Countryside
▶ During the three- and six-day workshops at the storied **Anna Tasca Lanza Cooking Experience**, the founder's

daughter, Fabrizia, teaches leisurely lessons in her farmhouse kitchen. When you're not making dishes like fried zucchini blossoms stuffed with ricotta and panelle (deep-fried chickpea fritters), you'll be relaxing on the lush, rambling grounds.

From \$2,500 per person (includes classes and lodging), annatascalanza.com.

TASTE SOUTH AMERICA

Buenos Aires, Argentina
▶ Husband-and-wife team Veronica Tarragona, a travel planner, and Manuel Escalante Posse, a professional chef,

run **Tierra Negra Cooking Classes** out of their home in Palermo Hollywood. Whip up empanadas—dough and two fillings—from scratch, served with llajua (a northern Argentinean hot sauce) and dulce de leche flan, then wash it all down with wines from Salta, Mendoza, and Patagonia.

\$70, tierranegracooking.com.

MAKE PERFECT PAD THAI

Chiang Mai, Thailand
▶ On a daylong adventure with the **Thai Farm Cooking School**, you'll visit a local market, then head to the school's

own organic farm to prepare five dishes, including a curry, a stir-fry, and a noodle dish like pad Thai.

\$40, thaifarmcooking.com.

RAISE THE (CHOCOLATE) BAR

Punta Gorda, Belize
▶ Set in the jungle, the luxury **Belcampo Lodge, Belize** grows 100 acres of organic cacao trees. In a hands-on class,

you'll help transform the pods into chocolate using a conche machine, and temper it to make a sweet souvenir to take home—all while nibbling on samples while you work.

\$70, belcampobz.com.

BAKE UP A STORM

Paris, France
▶ Croissants, baguettes, macarons—sounds like heaven. **La Cuisine Paris** offers intensive two- and three-hour programs on mastering each of these quintessential French treats. If you can't pick just one, take a general pastry lesson, which covers everything from éclairs to tâtins.

From \$72, lacuisineparis.com.

DISPATCH FROM ITALY
"We dried the tomatoes outside, and they turned into an intense ruby-red paste. Tasting it was almost like eating the sun. I've been in Italy a long time and have never seen anything like this."

—Elizabeth Minchilli, Rome-based author and tour guide, on the tomato-paste course at **Anna Tasca Lanza Cooking Experience**

DISPATCH FROM VIETNAM
"On a recent trip, a girlfriend and I hired a free student guide from the local university. It was a win-win: We spent the day exploring Ho Chi Minh City like locals, while our tour guide practiced her English."

—Jaspal Riyait, Living design director



The view from Anna Tasca Lanza Cooking Experience in Sicily, where you'll cook with tomatoes and other farm-fresh ingredients.

COURTESY OF BLOCK SHOP (PRINTMAKERS)



ANDREA WYNER (DOORWAY); MOWIE KAY (CROISSANTS); IINDA ENGLISH (TOMATOES); NICOLE FRANZEN (BREAD);



MAKE A MEMORY WITH YOUR HANDS



Print With a Pro

Block Shop, Joshua Tree, California

Sisters Hopie and Lily Stockman are known for their dyed scarves, which are hand-printed with carved wooden blocks in Bagru, India (above). About four times a year, they teach the method during Sunday seminars near California's Joshua Tree National Park. Working outdoors at their 1952 homestead cabin, you'll create a cotton bandanna and a silk scarf, from start (sketching designs) to finish (dipping them in indigo). \$350; April 9, with additional fall dates TBA; blockshoptextiles.com.

Learn to Weave

WildCraft Studio School, Portland, Oregon & White Salmon, Washington

These crafts centers are among the few places offering workshops in the traditional Coast Salish art form—from a master of weaving who helped preserve the twill-and-twined technique from near extinction, no less. They also bring in other Native American artists to lead basketry and beadwork-weaving classes.

From \$150; March 18 and 19, April 1, May 20, and June 10 and 11; wildcraftstudio.school.com.

Throw a Pot

The Clay Studio, Philadelphia

If you're inspired by the ancient pottery on view at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, sign up for the 14-person introductory wheel workshops at this storied studio (est. 1974). You'll learn the basics of making a form and complete two or three pieces, which the staff will glaze, fire, and ship home for you. Or live out your Ghost Fantasies at a casual Date Night event. These happen three Fridays a month, and the fee includes beer, wine, and snacks. (You can play "Unchained Melody" in your head.)

From \$35, theclaystudio.org.

Work Some Wood

Center for Furniture Craftsmanship, Rockport, Maine

You don't need to know how to use a lathe—or a bowl gouge, or a spindle—to take this one-week introduction to wood turning. By day, you'll learn to transform cherry and maple into useful items like a mallet or a lidded container. At night, you're free to explore the picturesque New England town. (Don't miss dinner at 18 Central Oyster Bar & Grill in Rockport and, in nearby Camden, at Francine Bistro, from celebrated local chef Brian Hill.)

From \$770; July 3 to 7 and October 2 to 6; woodschool.org.

La Cuisine Paris, where you can master the croissant, is just steps from the Seine River.



COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH FANTASTIC BEASTS

African safaris vary wildly from country to country. Plan an adventure with this beginner's guide.



South Africa

Best for: Families and first-timers who want easy access to year-round game viewing (parks are within driving distance of Johannesburg and Cape Town).

Why go: Almost guaranteed sightings of big cats, elephants, buffalos, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, and wild dogs are the norm in private reserves.

Where to stay: **&Beyond Ngala Safari Lodge**, set in a 36,325-acre private reserve, recently reopened after a major makeover, with 21 expanded thatched cottages; new floor-to-ceiling windows mean even more chances to soak in the surroundings. [From \\$522*, *andbeyond.com*](#).

Botswana

Best for: Travelers who want to explore by land and water—and birders! It's home to more than 550 recorded species.

Why go: You'll access some of Africa's most pristine reserves (thanks to strictly enforced conservation regulations), as well as the Okavango Delta, one of the world's largest inland delta systems.

Where to stay: In northern Botswana's private 320,000-acre Selinda Reserve, **Great Plains Conservation** offers a four-night adventure

that includes walking and canoeing (depending on water levels) and ends at the Selinda Explorers Camp. [From \\$3,500 for four nights, *all-inclusive, greatplainsconservation.com*](#).

Kenya

Best for: People who want to blend a thrilling safari with an education in Maasai culture.

Why go: You can visit local villages and experience traditional music and dance. And during the annual migration between July and October, more than a million wildebeests cross the grassy plains.

Where to stay: The 30 tented, glass-fronted suites of **Angama Mara** are perched a thousand feet above the Great Rift Valley floor on *kopjes* (small hills) made famous in *Out of Africa*. It's a stunning base from which to see the remote stretches of the region. [From \\$850*, *angama.com*](#).

Namibia

Best for: Seekers of awe-inspiring wide-open spaces—and those willing to travel far afield to get to them. If you've already been on safari, this is an unforgettable follow-up.

Why go: To witness otherworldly landscapes, including some of the world's highest dunes, at Sossusvlei. You'll also spot desert-adapted wildlife, such as lions and rhinos.

Where to stay: **Little Ongava**—set in a private game reserve of wooded plains as far as the eye can see—lives up to its name: It has just three suites, each with a plunge pool, viewing deck, and indoor/outdoor showers. [From \\$883*, *ongava.com*](#).

Zimbabwe

Best for: Adventurers hoping to avoid crowds and a high price tag—both achievable here, since the country is relatively new to the safari circuit.

Why go: Varied experiences—including walking, canoeing, boating, game drives, and fishing—are possible, all overseen by some of Africa's most qualified and experienced guides.

Where to stay: **Wilderness Safaris** has rebuilt several of its eco-friendly camps within private concessions in Zimbabwe's iconic national parks. Our pick: Linkwasha Camp, in Hwange National Park, where the main lounge area overlooks a giant watering hole. [From \\$515*, *wilderness-safaris.com*](#).

**Prices are per person, per night, all-inclusive.*

DISPATCH FROM ALASKA

"A cruise was an ideal way to show my young boys the state's majestic landscape and wildlife up close. One day at dawn, we sailed silently into a fjord and watched chunks of ice the size of buildings crashing into the water from a slowly melting glacier—an image that, hopefully, they'll never forget."

— Jennie Tung, *Living* executive editor

Elephants in Namibia. Left: A sunset game drive.

ADRIAN GAUT/TRUNK ARCHIVE (SUNSET, ELEPHANTS); KEN KOCHIEY (SNORKLER)



EXPLORE UNDER WATER

A CLOSE-TO-HOME GEM

Bonaire

▶ Coral has been protected around this Dutch Caribbean island since 1979, which explains why it's one of the region's best spots for scuba diving. There are 86 (yes, 86!) public sites—many of which you can swim to right from the shore—and top-notch outfitters like **Dive Friends Bonaire** ([divefriendsbonaire.com](#)). And its calm, crystal-clear waters are ideal for beginners.

AN UNEXPECTED HAVEN

Kona, Hawaii

▶ With white-sand beaches, waterfalls, and three active volcanoes, the island of

Hawaii is mainly known for what's above the shore. But Kona, on the western coast, stands out for what swims beneath: vibrant reef fish and marine life like moray eels and manta rays, gliding among otherworldly lava formations. See it all on an excursion with **Jack's Diving Locker** ([jacksdivinglocker.com](#)).

FOR THE BUCKET LIST

The Maldives

▶ Time is of the essence if you've dreamed of diving in this set of 26 atolls in the

Indian Ocean. Sadly, warming temperatures and rising sea levels are slowly damaging the low-lying coral. Many resorts have protected house reefs to explore—including the new **Soneva Jani** (from \$1,870 per night, [soneva.com](#)), where you'll spot banded grouper, eagle rays, and parrot fish right off the beach—plus instructors to take you to nearby dive sites.

DISPATCH FROM
COLORADO

"A meditation practice is the best thing to travel with: It weighs nothing, can be taken anywhere, and lets you bring full attention to what's in front of you. On a recent visit to a Colorado hot springs, I'd wake up in the morning, meditate, take a long soak, and then head to a delicious breakfast. My practice enhanced the feeling of the hot water on my skin, and helped me savor the taste of the fresh eggs on my plate."

— Ellie Burrows, cofounder of New York City's Mndfi meditation studios

GET
OFF THE
GRID

ERIK GOLDSTEIN/OFSET (MOUNTAINS); COURTESY OF COMO HOTELS AND RESORTS (SWIMMER)

A scenic
mountain
valley in
Colorado.SLEEP
IN THE SKY**TreeHouse Point, Issaquah, Washington**

► Given its rustic yet comfy cabins built right into a rainforest canopy, it's hard to believe this retreat is just 22 miles outside of Seattle. Check out nearby hiking trails, sip your way through Woodinville wine country (where you can sample Bordeaux-style reds), take an on-site yoga or tai chi class, or chill with a book in one of the six sky-high rooms, which are spread over the nearly four-acre property.

From \$290 per night (two-night minimum), treehousepoint.com.

GET A
ROCKY
MOUNTAIN
HIGH**Smith Fork Ranch, Crawford, Colorado**

► Known for its luxury log cabins in the western Rockies, this ranch recently launched an overnight excursion to the remote Sink Creek campsite (altitude: 10,000 feet). After horseback riding there, you'll enjoy a candlelit dinner of local beef and farm-fresh vegetables before drifting off in your roomy tent, which comes complete with a mattress and a cozy sleeping bag.

\$600 for a one-night excursion (June to mid-October); cabins from \$1,015, all-inclusive (three-night minimum); smithforkranch.com.

ESCAPE TO
INDIA**The Ultimate Travelling Camp, Thiksey and Diskit, India**

► Some people need to venture clear across the world to truly disconnect. This mobile camp caters to those explorers by setting up lavish safari-style tents (with four-poster beds and hot showers) in the villages of Thiksey and Diskit, in India's Ladakh region, just over an hour-long flight from New Delhi. If the rugged landscape isn't enough to give you a whole new perspective, the activities—visiting ancient monasteries, riding a double-humped Bactrian camel—will.

Prices vary by camp. From \$999 for three nights, all-inclusive (open May 15 to September 30), tutc.com.

FIND INNER
PEACE**Chill in an Exotic Oasis**

There are many ways to achieve serenity; for some, it takes indulging at a luxury wellness resort like **Como Shambhala Estate** (above). Set on the banks of the Ayung River near Ubud, Bali, the intimate property has a resident nutritionist and naturopath and offers programs in Ayurveda, stress management, and rejuvenation—each of which includes lengthy sessions in the *ahh*-inspiring spa.

From \$2,100 per person for three nights, comohotels.com.

Be Here Now

Spirit Rock Meditation Center, in West Marin County, is an ideal stop for an om moment on a coastal-California road trip. With its weekly drop-in classes and affordable sliding-scale fees, the center makes learning to meditate easy and accessible for beginners. Themed

courses ranging from two to seven hours are also available, covering everything from mindful eating to the Chinese practice of qigong.

From \$15, spiritrock.org.

Commune With Trees

A hike in the woods feels rejuvenating, but did you know it's also been linked to reducing stress and improving memory and cognition? That's the theory behind the Japanese concept of forest bathing, or *shinrin-yoku*, which involves taking a guided, contemplative walk in nature while doing deep-breathing and mind-body-awareness exercises. Experience it at Arizona's **L'Auberge de Sedona** (lauberge.com); **the Lodge at Woodloch** (thelodgeatwoodloch.com), in Pennsylvania; **Blackberry Farm** (blackberryfarm.com), in Waldland, Tennessee; Nova Scotia's **Trout Point Lodge** (troutpoint.com); or—if an island is calling—**Secret Bay** (secretbay.dm), in Dominica.

◀ GIVE BACK WHILE YOU GET AWAY ▶

Elevate Destinations (elevatedestinations.com) has been called the Warby Parker of travel: Every journey booked—whether it's a foodie tour in Bolivia or a trek through Bhutan—enables an underserved group of children to visit an important site in their home country (Machu Picchu in Peru, for instance). History and architecture buffs will love **Adventures in Preservation** (adventuresinpreservation.org), which operates in the U.S. and Europe. Retreats include sleeping in a French chateau while helping to restore its 19th-century kitchen and chapel; or, in Virginia, you can excavate a 1600s plantation manor house. If you want to get your hands even dirtier, **WWOOF** (wwooof.net) places volunteers on organic farms, from olive groves in Greece to a vineyard in Patagonia. Guests typically live with families, cook what they pick, and linger over laid-back meals.